

Culmstock Rural District.

COUNTY OF DEVON.

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year ended 31st December, 1905.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1905, and am pleased to be able to say that on the whole it is a very satisfactory one.

Vital Statistics:

The Total Births registered were 91; giving a Birth Rate of 27·5 per 1000, being practically the same as that of last year, the average for your district for the past ten years being 27·7 per 1000. The Birth Rate for England and Wales for 1904 was 27·9 per 1000.

The Total Deaths registered were 39 in number, giving a Death Rate of 11·8 per 1000 as against 13·5 per 1000 for 1904, the average for your district for the past ten years being 14·29. The Death Rate for England and Wales for 1904 was 16·2 per 1000.

The Zymotic Death Rate was 0 per 1000, that for 1904 being ·9 per 1000. The Zymotic Death Rate for England and Wales for 1904 was 1·9 per 1000.

The Infant Death Rate was 65·9 per 1000 births registered as against 109·8 per 1000 for 1904. The average rate for the past ten years was 91·9 per 1000. The average rate for England and Wales for 1904 was 114·6 per 1000.

Of the 39 Deaths registered 18 occurred in persons over 65 years of age, and six in children under one year.

The following are the classified causes of death:—Phthisis 4, cancer 3, enteritis 1, bronchitis 3, premature birth 1, heart disease 7, accidents 2, all other diseases 18.

Vital Statistics for the Separate Parishes.

		Estimated Population.	Births Registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under one year.
Culmstock	..	757	18	8	1
Hemyock	..	815	23	8	0
Clayhidon	..	460	12	8	2
Burlescombe	..	665	23	7	1
Holcombe Rogus		603	15	8	2

House Accommodation. The Building Bye-Laws which you adopted in 1904 are working smoothly and cannot fail to be of benefit for the future good of the district.

The Housing of the working classes presents a problem of much importance and many of the present cottages leave much to be desired. One of the things which strikes me as being particularly bad is the number of cottages which have no bedroom provided with a fireplace. This must often be prejudicial to recovery in cases of serious illness, and introduces a serious drawback to efficient treatment, especially of lung diseases. It is surprising to what a number of farm houses and dairy houses this same omission applies.

No cases of overcrowding have been reported during the past year.

Water Supply is mostly from wells in your district and on the whole the supply is good. There have been no cases of water-borne disease brought under my notice during 1905. I have analysed several samples of drinking water. The water supply at the Council School at Culmstock proved upon analysis to be badly polluted. This matter is receiving attention at the present time.

During the past year an important and pleasing change has been made at Holcombe Rogus, where a considerable part of the village has been provided with good drinking water distributed for use by means of standpipes.

Sewerage and Drainage. No public work in this Department has been carried out during 1905. Several cases have been reported where sanitary arrangements were unsatisfactory and have been suitably dealt with.

Scavenging is not carried out by your Council, but is done by the occupiers of property.

Isolation Hospital. None provided.

Disinfection is, as before, carried out by your Inspector in all cases of notifiable infectious disease, with satisfactory results.

Prevalence of Sickness. The health of the district has on the whole been very satisfactory. There have been no deaths from zymotic disease. A small epidemic of scarlet fever occurred at Clayhidon towards the end of the year, but was limited to four houses. I think that undoubtedly four of the eight cases were examples of milk-borne infection.

Notifiable Zymotic Disease has been limited to the eight cases of scarlet fever above mentioned.

Slaughter Houses and Bakehouses have all been inspected and found in a satisfactory state. The necessary limewashing has been carried out in compliance with the law.

Public Elementary Schools have been inspected and found satisfactory with the exception of the case of bad water supply before mentioned.

Dairies and Cowsheds Act. None are registered in your district. In connection with my remarks made in the annual report for 1904 in connection with milk supply I cannot do better than quote a short extract from a leading article in a recent number of the *British Medical Journal* on "Rural Insanitation." . . . "What is it but tradition which persists in placing a cesspool or a foul privy within a few feet of a shallow well sunk in the gravel, when the daily application of earth to excrement not only renders the latter innocuous by at once starting nitrification, but converts it into a valuable manure? What scientific reason can be given for leaving tons of reeking liquid manure in close proximity to cowsheds and dairies, when its proper place is on the land, where it would take its share in paying the rent? Or what scientific reason can there be for the strongly-rooted opinion that the best water supply for cows is the pond which is well polluted with sewage, and that milk—that most sensitive of secretions—can safely be drawn from a cow whose udder is caked with manure, and by a milker whose hands and clothing are none of the cleanest?" These remarks may appear strong but I am sure there are strong grounds for them and they bear upon a subject which needs attention and which I think in the near future will be dealt with by more stringent legislation.

Factories and Workshops Act. No returns have been made and no inspections made.

Inspector. I append Mr. Beadon's Report for 1905. He is always willing and ready to help me in my work.

I am, Gentlemen,

Obediently yours,

W. HORTON DATE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Culmstock, Devon, February 19th, 1906.



Culmstock Rural District.

COUNTY OF DEVON.

ANNUAL REPORT OF INSPECTOR

For the Year ended 31st December, 1905.

GENTLEMEN,

There have been few complaints respecting Sanitary matters brought to your notice during the past year and the district has been comparatively free from notifiable disease. There was trouble in eradicating scarlet fever at Clayhidon but I hope this has now been done.

The great improvement brought about at Holcombe Rogus by the provision of a new water supply to parts of the village should be mentioned, the only defect in this matter being that the supply was not extended to Twitchen where the cottagers would have found it a great boon.

The water at Culmstock School was condemned and the County Education Committee is dealing with the question of a new supply as well as the repair of defects in the drainage there.

I inspected the elementary schools, the Bakehouses, Slaughter Houses, and Railway conveniences as usual and found them satisfactory.

Your obedient servant,

R. W. BEADON

